



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CEHR-D (690-400a)

23 SEP 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR All Commanders/Directors, USACE Commands

SUBJECT: Conferences as Training Activities

1. Training and development of our workforce is an essential component of success. There are many methods and sources of training and development opportunities including attendance at conferences.
2. Attendance at key conferences can be a valuable supplement to the more commonly used methods of training, such as classroom training or on-the-job training. The purpose of training, regardless of the method, is the same: to improve individual and organizational performance and assist in achieving the organization's mission and performance goals. There are many conferences held each year where the content is pertinent to the function or activity of the employee's organization; and it is evident developmental benefits would be derived by attendance. Examples are Blacks in Government National Training Conference, National Society of Professional Engineers Conference, and Federally Employed Women's National Training Program Conference.
3. Attendance at a conference can be considered a developmental assignment when:
 - a. The announced purpose of the conference is education or instructional.
 - b. More than half of the time is scheduled for a planned, organized exchange of information between presenters and audience which meets the definition of training.
 - c. The content of the conference is germane to improving individual and/or organization performance.
 - d. Developmental benefits will be derived through the employee's attendance.


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4. I strongly believe that we should invest in our people and that all training opportunities should be accorded in a fair and equitable manner. The guidance provided above will assist you in determining when attendance at a conference can be considered developmental.

5. As a reminder, the Chief of Staff of the Army has requested that we take aggressive steps to reduce non-training TDY costs, specifically in the conduct of conferences. In the spirit of this initiative we must review attendance at all conferences, to include those determined to be training, to ensure that attendance meets a high priority need and that costs are kept to a minimum.



JOE N. BALLARD
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding